

STATINTL

White House Denies Nixon's Cuba Charge

By E. W. KENWORTHY
Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 20—The White House denied today a charge by Richard M. Nixon that President Kennedy had been informed of the secret preparations for a refugee landing in Cuba before he issued his 1960 campaign call for United States aid to anti-Castro forces.

Allen W. Dulles, who was head of the Central Intelligence Agency at the time, supported the President's reconstruction of events, but said he believed Mr. Nixon's statement to be the result of "an honest misunderstanding."

In a book entitled "Six Crises," scheduled for publication March 29, the former Vice President refers to a speech on Oct. 20, 1960, in which Mr. Kennedy advocated support for those

Cubans eager to fight against Premier Fidel Castro.

Mr. Kennedy already knew that the United States had, for many months, been training exiles "for the eventual purpose of supporting an invasion of Cuba," Mr. Nixon says.

Mr. Kennedy's public advocacy of a policy already adopted, Mr. Nixon writes, endangered "the security of the whole operation."

"For the first and only time in the campaign, I got mad at Kennedy—personally," Mr. Nixon says.

Asked for comment on this charge today, Pierre Salinger, White House press secretary, said:

"The President does not believe that intelligence briefings are a proper subject of public debate, but in the light of the account in Mr. Nixon's book, it is necessary to say that the then Senator Kennedy was not told before the election of 1960 of the training of troops outside of Cuba or of any plans for supporting an invasion of Cuba."

"Mr. Nixon's account is apparently based on a misunderstanding. Senator Kennedy received two briefings from Mr. Allen Dulles of the C. I. A., the first on July 23, 1960, and the second on Sept. 19, 1960."

"The two briefings covered an overall review of the world situation during which Cuba was mentioned. But Senator Kennedy was first informed of the operation to which Mr. Nixon refers in a briefing by Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell of the C. I. A. given at Palm Beach, Fla., on Nov. 18, 1960."

Mr. Bissell at that time was Mr. Dulles's deputy in charge of operations, as distinct from the evaluation of intelligence.

This afternoon the agency made public a memorandum from Mr. Dulles to his successor, John A. McCone, in which Mr. Dulles said:

"I have read the portions of Mr. Nixon's book with regard to the intelligence briefings which he understood Senator Kennedy had been given by me with respect to Cuba during the campaign."

"I have also seen the White House statement issued today on this subject."

"There has been here, I believe, an honest misunderstanding. This was probably due to the nature of the message Mr. Nixon writes he received as to these briefings."

"The Cuban situation was of

course dealt with in the briefings I gave Senator Kennedy. The last briefing I gave him was over a month before the debate in which the issue arose.

"My briefings were intelligence briefings on the world situation. They did not cover our own Government's plans or programs for action, overt or covert."

Officials said today that Senator Kennedy had also been briefed on Nov. 2 by Gen. Charles Cabell of the C. I. A., but that Cuba had not been mentioned.

Nixon in California

In Whittier, Calif., where he was attending a church convocation, Mr. Nixon was told of the White House statement. He said:

"I have no comment at this time, until I have a chance to read the statement. There will be a lot of controversy over the book, I imagine."

In his book, Mr. Nixon related that as early as April, 1959, following a three-hour conference with Premier Castro, he had advocated a strong policy against Cuba.

It was not until early in 1960, Mr. Nixon wrote, that his counsel prevailed, "and the C. I. A. was given instructions to provide arms, ammunition and training for Cubans who had fled the Castro regime and were now in exile in the United States and various Latin-American countries."

The program had been in operation for six months when the campaign opened, Mr. Nixon stated. When his opponent began demanding "militant" policies against Premier Castro, Mr. Nixon said, he was "in the position of a fighter with one hand tied behind his back," because he could not even hint at what was under way.

As soon as he had read news accounts of Mr. Kennedy's Oct. 20 speech, Mr. Nixon said, he asked Fred Seaton, Secretary of the Interior, "to call the White House at once on the security line and find out whether Dulles had briefed Kennedy on the fact that for months the C. I. A. had not only been supporting and assisting but actually training Cuban exiles."

Mr. Nixon wrote:

"Seaton reported back to me in half an hour. His answer:

Kennedy had been briefed on this operation."

Despite the fact that Senator Kennedy had him "at a terrible disadvantage," Mr. Nixon said, he decided not to disclose the secret operation and "to go the other extreme" when they met in the fourth debate the following night.

"I must attack the Kennedy proposal to provide such aid as wrong and irresponsible because it would violate our treaty commitments," he said in the debate.

During the debate, Mr. Nixon characterized Mr. Kennedy's proposal as "dangerously irresponsible," and one that would, if followed, "lose all our friends in Latin America" and be "an open invitation" to Premier Khrushchev "to come into Latin America and to engage us in what would be a civil war and possibly even worse than that."

Memorandum from Dulles

The upshot, Mr. Nixon wrote, was that he was placed in the "ironic position" of appearing softer on Premier Castro than Mr. Kennedy and that the pro-Kennedy columnists and editorial writers, for the one and only time in the campaign, "gave me the better of the argument."

A spokesman for Doubleday & Co., publishers of the Nixon book, was asked today whether any corrections or deletions would be made in the second printing as a result of the White House statement. The spokesman replied:

"I am sure that Mr. Nixon believed this when he wrote it, and we are publishing his book

in good faith. I can't tell you whether it (the second printing) will be any different."

The first printing was 60,000 copies. Pre-publication excerpts are appearing in Life magazine. News articles on the book appeared in Washington and New York this morning as a result of pre-publication sales by many bookstores.

Mr. Salinger declined to comment on other statements in the book. He said the President had read the section charging him with a security violation. Neither the President nor any one else in the White House has communicated with Mr. Nixon regarding the charges, Mr. Salinger said.